THE

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Original Papers.

THE EMIGRANTS.

No. III.

GROTTO PASSAGE INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS—DEPARTURE OF EMIGRANTS.

In a former paper we adverted to the great disappointment felt by many of the ragged boys, through the failure of Lord Ashley's Motion on behalf of Emigration. The publication of the "Emigrants' Letters," which were freely distributed in the schools, has increased that feeling, as, by their perusal, many of the poor boys have been enabled more fully to realize the extent of their loss.

When the plan was first suggested, a strong suspicion obtained in the minds of the children and their parents, that there was really less benevolence or mercy in the proposition, than was represented by their professed friends. They concluded that something more than mere philanthropy had to do with it, which they had not fully discovered. Some looked upon it as the mere development of a selfish object, for which the best children in the schools were to be sacrificed. Others considered it a secret system of transportation, without the benefit of council or jury. Not a few thought it merely a plan for decimating their numbers, by getting them out to sea, and then sinking the ships! Among the parents, the report was current, that it was a new system of British slavery, and that Lord Ashley was to have £10 for every young "Arab of the city" he could capture. This feeling prevailed to a formidable extent among the parents of the first company of children who emigrated; and it was not until the benevolence of the object was proved to some extent, by the children receiving comfortable outfits,

that these impressions were removed. But we need not wonder that such impressions took fast hold of the minds of these people. It was the natural effect of their early training and experience. They were not accustomed to believe that pure benevolence towards *them*, existed in the hearts of those in superior circumstances to their own. In many instances, their opportunities of knowing had been few, and the samples they had were all unfavourable. The angry landlord, calling for his week's rent, when the money is yet to earn, and the work to seek, and who, therefore, threatens to turn them out of their dingy dwellings, and hand over to the "broker" the few fragments of broken furniture which constitute their earthly all — the tradesman, who never learned to "speak gently to the erring," but who changes the tone of his voice as soon as they enter his shop or warehouse, and churlishly tells them he can give them no work for another week—the oft-deceived shopkeeper, who has learned by sad experience to speak in a repulsive tone, and do no business on credit, nor allow his goods to leave the shop until they are paid for—these, together with the stern official of the parish workhouse, who denies them the weekly pittance to which they *think* they have a *claim*, are, in many cases, the only parties in better circumstances than their own, with whom that class of poor have any dealings. It need not, therefore, be matter of surprise, that such suspicions should prevail regarding the promoters of the Emigration Scheme. It was partly on this account that the Committee of the Ragged School Union resolved to print a few of the letters received from those who had arrived in Australia, and distribute them among the children, thereby supplying them with evidence from their own companions. But, while this important object has been gained, the feeling of disappointment has been greatly increased among those who have been labouring to qualify themselves for a participation in a further Grant, and this chiefly in the most efficient schools, where the children had profited most by instruction.

In the Grotto Passage Industrial Schools this feeling had so much prevailed, that the Committee generously resolved to send out four of the most deserving lads, chiefly at their own expense.* The arrangements for embarkation having been completed, a meeting was held in the school-room, on Monday evening, November 12th, for the purpose of bidding farewell to the happy participants in the much-valued boon.

A number of the best-behaved lads took tea in the school-room, along with their teachers and friends; after which, the meeting was made more public for the rest of the scholars, of whom a considerable number assembled. The chair was taken by W. J. Maxwell, Esq., Secretary of the Schools, who, in a suitable address, impressed upon the minds of the

* We understand the Committee are about to send out a fifth boy, who was formerly connected with the Grotto Passage Schools.

youth, especially those about to leave, how much their future welfare depended on the practical attention they gave to the instructions received at school. They were afterwards addressed by the Rev. J. E. White, M.A., H. Hayward, Esq., Mr. Haselden, Mr. W. Locke, and Mr. A. Anderson, of the Ragged School Union, during which their duties were illustrated and enforced, in a manner which they cannot fail long to remember. Boxes, containing excellent outfits, also at the expense of the Committee of the Schools, were presented to the emigrants, along with suitable books and other small presents.

We sincerely trust that many such meetings will yet be held in connection with other schools, and that the public will imitate the praiseworthy example of that Committee, by supplying the Ragged School Union with sufficient funds for sending out another hundred and fifty deserving children during the coming year. We know of no better means of removing those feelings of jealousy or distrust, which may naturally and reasonably prevail among the uneducated poor, than by the wealthy showing for them a *practical* sympathy, treating them as brethren, and striving to do them good. By this means they will gain back their lost affections, establish more securely the institutions of our country, and thus cause their deeds of benevolence to return back with a still greater blessing on themselves.

A FEW WORDS ON CHRISTMAS.

BY OLD FATHER THAMES.

When I look back on the many and the merry Christmases that I have spent in the world, and call to mind how many of my old friends, accustomed to enjoy them with me, are now lying under the turf, it casts a shadow on my spirit. But, painful as these bereavals are, we require them to chasten our mirth, to sober our reflections, to solemnize our minds, and to lift our thoughts above the stars. Ay! and we require them, too, to quicken our pace in the paths of philanthropy, for they tell us, that to delay a deed of kindness, or a work of usefulness, may be to leave it undone for ever.

Christmas, with all its family-gatherings, its church-goings, and its charities, is a different thing to some people to what it is to others. Many would hardly think it to be Christmas without the crackling faggot and the farm-house fare, the reeking joints and the foaming cup; but what would hundreds of the poor lads in Ragged Schools think of the account of a good orthodox Christmas dinner? It would appear to them much more like a fairy tale than a reality. They see the red-berried holly, the misletoe, and the evergreen; and, if they choose, they may tell one another tales in Christmas fashion, and play at blindman's buff as long as they like; but as to the smoking sirloin, the turkey and chine, the pheasant pies, moor fowls, plum puddings, mince pies, and wassail bowl—these are quite out of their way. Their appetites may, perhaps, be whetted by the appearance of some of these in the cook's

shop windows, but that is the only opportunity they have of setting their eyes upon them. Though it is by no means desirable to put dainties before them, yet would it do me good to see a thousand of them seated to a good plain dinner on Christmas Day, instead of dining, as most likely many of them will, with "Duke Humphrey."

It would be a singular, though a painful spectacle, could we follow a dozen neglected, ragged lads in their Christmas career; some of them honest, some of them thieves; some of them industrious, some of them idle—but all of them friendless. Now pining with hunger, and now indulging in the most wasteful extravagance, purchased with the wages of dishonesty. At one time asleep on a stone step, or in a squalid lodging-house; and at another, revelling in that den of moral darkness, the gas-light dancing saloon; or greedily drinking in iniquity at the penny theatre, while gazing on the exciting scenes of "*The Bond of Blood*," or "*The Path of Crime*." Surely such scenes as these should call up a desire in every honest heart, to win these friendless backsliders to a course more consistent with their welfare here, and their happiness hereafter.

Many of the ragged community of wretchedness are altogether dependent on vicious pursuits for their daily bread, and these are always running risks to obtain the bits and drops that support them. They either act under tyrannical thieves, or trade in iniquity on their own account. Their every day is, as it were, a toss-up between the lodging-house and a prison; and, with some of them, transportation is by no means an improbable contingency.

The way in which the community has hitherto dealt with juvenile offenders against the law, is a little like the manner in which sporting gentlemen manage the game on their estates. The latter first employ keepers at a great cost to increase their hares, pheasants, and partridges, and then go around with fowling-pieces to destroy them. In like manner, the community allow the old thieves, certainly at no trifling expense to the public, to increase the number of youthful delinquents, and then, armed with authority, and animated with virtuous indignation, zealously proceed to capture, imprison, transport, and hang them, as the case may be. Now we know that sportsmen do not really wish to diminish their game, or they might do so at a small part of the expense it costs to maintain them; and if the community was in real earnest to prevent the increase of juvenile offenders, it might do so by an outlay of one tithe of what is expended in their maintenance and punishment.

Perhaps I might give a yet more familiar illustration of the manner in which enlightened England has acted with regard to the wretched and depraved outcasts of her population. England has acted like an idle and unthinking cottager, who, instead of cultivating his garden, allows the weeds abundantly to increase in it; and then, and not till then, holding up his hands with astonishment at the tangled wilderness before him, sets to work resolutely for a whole day in attempting to remedy what might have been prevented by a single hour. Hardly do I think that I have overdrawn my picture.

The very attempt, to say nothing of success, to rescue youthful wretchedness and crime from destitution and destruction, is creditable to

humanity; and this attempt must be made with the friendless scholars of the Ragged Schools, without putting them into a false position. They must be taught to love labour, and to see its advantages. "The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much;" and "better is a handful with quietness, than both the hands full with travail and vexation of spirit." And they must be led to understand that honour dwells with every honest man, and that a glory surrounds the habitation of the pious poor.

However merrily Christmas may be spent, the pestilence has flung a shadow in many a dwelling, that gas-light, and the smoking board, and the wine cup, cannot illumine. Well will it be if the grateful heart is moved to manifest its thankfulness for preservation, by some substantial pledge of its sincerity. Among the rejoicing sons and daughters of merry Christmas, I do trust there will be those who, among other praiseworthy resolutions, will resolve to remember the Ragged Schools. A joyous moment and a deed of mercy harmonize well together.

I wish I could move my own heart, and the hearts of others, to be more in love than we are with "whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, and whatsoever things are of good report;" for then, as a willing horse requires no spur, our willing minds would require no persuasion. Thankful for our own mercies, we should rival one another in removing the miseries of others, and, according to our ability, do good unto all men.

It is an excellent thing, at all times, to have examples before us for our imitation. When we read of eminently useful servants of God, who, by meekness, faith, and patience, self-denial, holy fervour of spirit, unfeigned love, and long continuance in well-doing, even to death, have benefited mankind, and extended the glory of their Divine Lord and Master, we regard them with mingled respect and veneration. A man cannot stand by a gigantic column without feeling himself to be a dwarf; neither can we contemplate the character of these holy men without a sense of our inferiority. We feel ashamed that we have done so little, and desire to do more for the glory of the Redeemer. May both this shame and this desire increase in our hearts!

And it is just the same with philanthropy as it is with religion; those who have largely contributed to the general hoard of happiness grow in our regard and love, and will live in our remembrance. We want real heroes and real philanthropists; not those who selfishly proclaim themselves to be such. What is a philanthropist? Is one that aggrandizes himself, and derives wealth from his supposed benevolence? No—but one that so truly loves mankind that he will practise self-denial, make sacrifices for those he professes to serve, give freely of what God has freely given him, and, according to his ability, serve the meanest fellow-creature that breathes beneath the canopy of heaven. "And what is a hero? Surely not the man that deluges fields with blood, and leaves smoking ruins, and wrecks, and blasted villages; but he who deposits in the hearts of the desolate the hope of glory, communicates to humanity new, brighter, and more thrilling hopes; lifts it from the degradation in which sin has laid it; turns its heretofore tearful face to the skies; and tells it that, however smitten, proscribed, and persecuted,

it may look at the everlasting hills, and have eternity for its life-time, infinity for its home, the great God for its Father, and all the inhabitants of heaven for its blessed and its happy companions."

And now let me wish my readers, and all supporters of Ragged Schools, and teachers and scholars, and the people of this great city of London, and the inhabitants of this highly-favoured country, from the Orkneys to the Isle of Wight, and from Margate to the Land's End, in the very best sense of the words—A merry Christmas and a happy New Year!

I love Christmas, for it not only smacks of red holly berries, pure frosty air, bright fires, beaming faces, goodly fare, kind-heartedness, and charity, but it brings to our remembrance bygone days of home and happiness. "It is a sunbeam, that bids the green leaves and spring flowers of the heart unfold themselves and burst forth." And I love a Christmas Carol, too, for it gives a tone of cheerfulness and thankfulness to our spirits, and has a tendency to confirm our faith in holy things. As I have been trying my hand at a carol, I will here lay it before you. Read over, then, with a kindly spirit, the stanzas of Old Father Thames.

A NEW CAROL FOR CHRISTMAS DAY.

AWAKE! for this is Christmas morn,
And raise your voices high,
To celebrate the Son of God
Descending from the sky.
Ye winged hallelujahs rise,
The Lord of life proclaim!
Ye loud hosannas rend the skies,
And magnify his name!

Did bright-eyed burning seraphim
Attend him on his way,
And, flashing round his radiant car,
The living lightning play?
Did glittering stars adorn the crown
That decked his sacred head,
And glowing skies, with purple dyes,
Their robes around him spread?

No seraph wav'd his shining wing;
No splendour round him roll'd;
The Prince of peace among us came—
A child of mortal mould.

His life was love—he came to save—
Yet still, in savage glee,
Men bound his brow with cruel thorns,
And nail'd him to the tree.

But see—he rises!—rolls away
The dark sepulchral stone;
And triumphs over death, and reigns
On heaven's eternal throne.
Be ours to do what good we can
At merry Christmas time;
And save the young and outcast throng
From wretchedness and crime.

To clear from shame the cloudy brow
Of him that has no friend;
And gladly bless the fatherless,
And thus our praises blend.
Ye winged hallelujahs rise,
The Lord of life proclaim!
Ye loud hosannas rend the skies,
And magnify his name!

THE SANITARY CONDITION OF LONDON.

THE following important letter, addressed, by the Chairman of our Society, to the Editor of the *Times*, and which lately appeared in that paper, will repay an attentive perusal. The cause is one very closely connected with our own, and to which every true friend of the poor must wish prosperity, on his own account as well as theirs:—

Sir,—It is with some reluctance that I venture to request for this letter a place in your columns. I am induced, however, to do so by an earnest hope, that the present opportunity, resulting from the ravages of the late epidemic, and the painful experience it has conveyed, may issue in some

effective and permanent improvement of the domiciliary condition of the working classes.

The time is singularly favourable for such an effort. We have been spared, by God's mercy, the profligacy and demoralization so often the consequences of pestilence and mortality; the people have been rather softened than exasperated by their sufferings. The valuable reports of Mr. Grainger to the Board of Health, and of Mr. Simon to the Corporation of London, will attest that they are labouring under no prejudice, nor belief of poisoned wells, and sinister attempts to reduce the population;—nay, the reverse; they are really grateful to those who have visited from house to house in their behalf; and, having acquired at last a better understanding of their own physical and social exigencies, are most ready to receive any counsels that friendly and experienced persons might be disposed to give them.

I refer now especially to their domiciliary condition, because it lies at the root of all attempts to render to a people substantial service. Regarded physically or morally, it is an indispensable preliminary to all improvements that they should possess within their dwellings whatever is required for cleanliness and decency. Now, to show the physical mischiefs that, in this respect, beset the population of London, as well as most of our towns, be they great or small, (and much that is said of the towns may be applied to not a few of the agricultural districts,) I need only refer to the statements nearly every day in the columns of your journal, the reports of the Registrar-General, and of the various sanitary associations. Disgusting and horrible as they are, I can assert, of my own personal knowledge, that they fall short of the monstrous reality. If they do not beget, they unquestionably invite and localize epidemic disorders; and I have indeed long entertained a belief, which is confirmed by hourly investigation, and the opinion of many friends who are joined with me in these inquiries, that a very large proportion of the pauperism of the country, with its appalling train of debilitated frames, widows, and orphans, is the result of the sanitary condition to which our neglect has abandoned such vast multitudes.

As for the moral mischiefs, their name is Legion. I can call to witness, I am sure, every minister of religion, the Scripture Readers, the City Missionaries, the district visitors. They will concur with me in declaring, that to aim at the spiritual improvement of the fœtid swarms that, without either the practice or the possibility of decency—without limitation of age, sex, or numbers, crowd the stinking apartments of the lanes, courts, and alleys of this great metropolis, is a vain and fruitless effort. The work, too, of education is altogether baffled; for the child, returning to these abodes of promiscuous and animal life, unlearns in a single hour the lessons of an entire day.

An effort such as this offers another advantage—it requires no preliminary delay; we may commence forthwith. The improvement, I rejoice to say, of the dwellings of the poor, with its concomitant blessings of health and morals, is no longer a matter of theory or investigation; it has been established by abundant proof; it may be seen in full operation in the various model lodging-houses of London, founded by the Labourers' Friend Society, by many benevolent individuals, and by the Metropolitan Society for Improving the Dwellings of the Working Classes—a joint-stock company, which, if it were well supported, would, of itself, be able to grapple with half the mischief. We may see in them decency, cleanliness, and repose: in the houses for single men, every comfort their station requires, at the price which each one would elsewhere pay for the twentieth part of some pestilential sty; in the houses for families, three well-aired

apartments, with a daily and ample supply of water, for the rent they would otherwise pay for one single room, and no water at all. The effects are corresponding; the human beings are elevated; they look better, speak better, think better, and are placed in a situation where it is their own fault if they do not discharge their duties as Englishmen and Christians.

It is well worthy of remark, that while the cholera was ravaging, to a frightful extent, the filthy and over-crowded receptacles, these new-fashioned lodging-houses were altogether spared. In all the establishments belonging to the Labourers' Friend Society there was not (so I am informed by Mr. Berry, our honorary surgeon) one case of cholera, and two only of diarrhœa, which speedily yielded to medical treatment. I have heard the same most striking statement from Mr. Gatliffe, the Secretary to the Metropolitan Association.

The establishment of baths and washhouses is an indispensable part of any system for improving the domestic condition of the poor. To omit for a moment the effect upon health, we may assert, that it is absolutely impossible to a large mass of the population, however well-disposed, to be cleanly in their clothes or in their persons. This is no figure of speech—if any one doubt it, let him perambulate the streets and alleys, penetrate the courts, dive into the cellars, and climb into the garrets, the swarming nests of filth and misery, and he will then admit the truth of this assertion. He may find some houses, perhaps, where the laborious, scanty, and imperfect washing is carried on in the only apartment tenanted by the whole family. But an evil arises here, for hundreds of instances may be recounted in which the husbands, to avoid the disorder and discomfort of their homes, have become the habitual frequenters of a pothouse.

These, too, require no further investigation; the success of the admirable establishments in Goulston Street, Euston Square, and the parish of St. Martin, has manifested, beyond a doubt, the adaptation of such arrangements to the welfare of the people, and the exigencies of the times.

The truth is, that all these provisions should henceforward form a part of our normal state, and become inseparable items of the parochial system.

Every one will admit it to be a singular advantage in the plans proposed, that they partake in no respect of an eleemosynary character. The institutions are self-supporting, and, in order to be widely diffused, must be remunerative. The model-houses, constructed or adapted to the purpose at the expense of individuals or associated bodies, have proved that they will be so, and encourage the outlay of public and private funds in a benevolent yet profitable investment. The rents, fixed at a reasonable amount, are rigorously demanded and punctually paid. The independence of the working-man is thus consulted and maintained, while the aid of those who possess capital or leisure, (the very things which the working-men generally neither have nor can have,) does no more than render available for his service the gifts and resources of health and industry.

It has been estimated that, on an average, the working-man loses by sickness (the result, in most instances, of his noisome abode) about thirty days of labour in each year. Suppose his condition improved, and he lose but ten, the savings on the twenty, in time and medicine, may be calculated as worth at the least £3—no inconsiderable sum in the minute details of 10*s.* a-week. But the pecuniary benefit of the washhouses to the labouring class is still greater. A woman may now, by the excellent arrangements of these institutions, do for herself and her family, in three hours and a half, and with the outlay of a few pence, as much as (badly done after all) would have occupied, in her own house, the better part of two days, amidst neglected children, a disordered household, and the

pestiferous exhalations from linen hung to be dried in the common apartment. And as to the financial effects, some housewives of this class informed me, that they calculated the reduction on the actual sum formerly assigned to washing expenses (omitting the value of the time saved) to be no less than seventy-five per cent., and in some instances even more.

These several reductions must be estimated as tantamount to an actual increase of the wages of labour by a legitimate and permanent mode, which hurts no principle of political economy, maintains and confirms the independence of the working man, and simply opens to him the field for the free and rightful exercise of his moral and physical energies. If I am correct in this view it will be unnecessary to seek any further arguments; those to whom I appeal will remember the 10th of April, and the noble demeanour of the people; they will remember their fortitude and patience under their late sufferings; and will award that sympathy and co-operation which the wealthy and powerful of these realms have oftentimes been so forward to bestow.

GOOD SEED BEARING FRUIT.

Dismissed, for her glaring misconduct, from a comfortable situation, and unable, from bodily infirmity, to work for bread, the mother betook herself to begging on the public streets, where her misery and her boy proved a source of wealth, which she wasted in habits of drunkenness. The more money to the mother, the more misery to the child. Let *that* be observed and remembered by the reader: it furnishes an argument for our schools in many other cases besides this. When the mother was intoxicated she was infuriated, and the hapless boy often fled from her cruelty to the common stair, where, with a step for his only pillow, he lay the long winter night, to sleep—when the cold would let him. Some kind Samaritan brought the child to our school, ignorant as a heathen—neither knowing a letter, nor a God, nor a Saviour. The little fellow has now been some twelve months or more with us; and our humble friend, the widowed tenant of a room five stories up, and living, to use her own expression, *but* and *ben* from them, tells us that she has often heard him, on his return in the evening, speaking to his mother as if he were an old, gray-haired Christian. With more sense than some beyond his years, he has learned the lesson of Divine wisdom—"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs; neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." When he finds his wretched parent in a condition which unfits her to listen to counsel, he is silent; but on her sober evenings it is his practice to read the Bible to her—to tell her how the Master said this and that—and, graciously inverting the order of nature, to be the monitor and instructor of his own mother. Through the thin partition which usually divides these rooms of poverty, our informant has often listened with amazement to this child, affectionately warning his parent of the sad consequences of her sin—"Ah! mither, mither, what a dreadful thing it will be, when Jesus Christ comes to judgment, if I, standing at his right hand, should see my mither on the left; and you're sure to be *there* if ye live on as you're doing." In the humble locality where these parties

dwell, the remarkable demeanour of this boy, and visible change wrought on his habits and appearance, have recommended our Ragged School to the neighbours round about; and it is our reward and encouragement to know, that this child has obtained for us the kindliest regards of that humble neighbourhood, and a name there "above all Greek or Roman fame;" for of how much truer value than the passing applause of the world is the blessing of those who are ready to perish!

Such are the fruits and discipline of our school; and surely we do not need to tell the reader that money spent upon the young is spent with greatest promise. We have not the shadow of a doubt, that one single pound contributed to the Ragged School will turn to better account than one hundred pounds spent on Penitentiary or Prison. We are sure that one pound employed on the reformation of a criminal in embryo is far better bestowed than one hundred pounds devoted to the reformation of veterans in crime; just as by the power of a one-pound weight you can give a bent and form to the tender branch, which the weight, not of one, but of one thousand pounds, cannot impart to the giant arm of some gray and hoary tree, that breaks, but refuses to bend. And, growing more and more alive to the power of the prophet's question, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?" our eye turns away from other schemes, to look on these schools with the fondest anticipations—to regard them as offering to our outcast population "a door of hope in the valley of Achor." Other plans of benevolence have been tried on these masses. Home and City Missions, with their multiplied machinery, have had their period of probation; and the longer that extends, the deeper grows our impression, that it is a hard, we dare not say a hopeless task, to turn the river which has worn itself a channel in the rock, and change a population that are, so to speak, hard and set in crime. While we would follow to his very grave the hoary-headed sinner, with calls of repentance and offers of mercy, still would we press on our readers our own deep-seated conviction, that the greatest efforts should be made in the direction of the young; and that, therefore, among other schemes, the Ragged School has claims on a humane and Christian public—we shall not say before all—we do say second to none.—*Guthrie's Second Plea.*

DESTITUTION AND IGNORANCE.

From a paper drawn up by the Committee of the Field Lane Ragged School, and now in course of circulation, we present our readers with the following extracts—as showing a state of wretchedness and destitution which few would be prepared to credit, were it not for the respectable parties by whom it is substantiated. Truly "the rich and poor meet together," but the one knows not how the other lives—

"Towards the latter end of May, the City Missionary of the district, accompanied by a brother Missionary and one of the Committee, visited the arches near where the school stands, and there, crowded together, they discovered seventeen wretched, homeless, friendless creatures, who had crawled thither, unable to procure money for lodging, and having no

other place to which to resort. They were invited to attend the school the next morning; they came, and a most wretched and pitiable sight it was: bread was given and prayer offered, and they were directed to Jesus, the bread of life. The case being made known to Lord Ashley, with his usual kindness his Lordship, at about midnight on the 31st of May, in the company of the friends referred to, visited the arches, and found a large number of these poor creatures. For some time they came to the school, and received the best advice that could be given, and a daily allowance of bread. Of these, four were received into the Refuge, in Old Pye Street, Westminster; two were taken into Mr. Nash's dormitory, and three procured admission into the workhouse, being ill from sleeping under the arches, and want of necessary food. The rest would gladly have remained under the arches at night, but in consequence of the cholera making its appearance, the police received instructions to prevent them; they were therefore compelled to walk the streets for several nights, till at length a friend, at his own expense, took an attic in a neighbouring court, where they could sleep—eight were received. At first they had only the bare boards on which to lie, but even this was such a change for the better that joy beamed in every countenance. Other friends being raised up, supplies of bread, left-off clothes, and mattresses, were procured. Shortly after this the Committee took a house in Fox and Knot Court, containing four rooms, and fitted it up as a dormitory; and there are now constantly six or eight of the most wretched and destitute lodging there, who are supplied with a portion of plain food daily.

Since the night when the discovery was first made, FIFTY of these poor creatures have come under notice: of these, thirty-three had no parents; fourteen had one parent each; and only three had both parents living. Twenty-three of them had no shirts, sixteen had no shoes, and most of them had their clothes in a tattered condition, while their bodies were filthy in the extreme. Some of them had not slept in a bed for five weeks, some not for five months, and some not many times during two years.

Of these fifty, twenty-two have been admitted into the dormitory, of whom four have obtained employment; four have been restored to their friends; six have left of their own accord; six are still in; and two have been expelled as incorrigible. Others are waiting to be admitted.

It should be also stated, that many could not read at all, and that they have been trying to get a living by begging, or stealing, or picking up bones, etc.; so that we found a considerable number had been in prison, and some several times.

Perhaps there are many who may think that these boys, several of them being very bad characters, were quite undeserving of notice. That *some* of them were undeserving there can be no doubt; but not all: and the Committee felt it was not so much their duty, in the first instance, to investigate what had brought them into such a truly pitiable state, as to try to relieve them. They were well nigh starved; they were filthy in the extreme, had scarcely a vestige of clothing, and it was imperative upon the Committee to stretch out their hand and help them. Jesus fed a fainting multitude without inquiring whether they were sincere in thus following him, and cured all manner of diseases, which a life of sin had produced. . . .

The Committee have one of the rooms of the dormitory fitted up for industrial classes, and they have engaged the services of a tailor and a shoemaker to instruct several boys in their respective trades. It is hoped that some boys may here gain sufficient knowledge of one of these trades to fit them for emigration to Australia, where they would get plenty of employment. More than thirty boys have been admitted to these classes. . . .

A few Sundays ago, nearly twenty young men—thieves, costermongers, drovers, etc., presented themselves for admission. The school was quite full, and the time for closing nearly arrived, so that the superintendent refused to admit them till next Friday. "We wish to come in," was the reply, "as we want some religion." The superintendent was much moved, and would have tried to let them in if it had been earlier; "but," said he, "school will close in a quarter of an hour." "Yes, sir," was the rejoinder; "but isn't a quarter of an hour's religion better than none at all?" Several of this number have attended regularly since, scarcely one of whom can read.

Poetry.

HE MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

BY S. W. PARTRIDGE.

He might have been! What might he *not* have been—
That vice-encrusted, passion-fetter'd thing—
Had Christian kindness sunned his youthful mind
With beams of sacred truth? Alas for him—
The child was parentless! it had no home
But that unwholesome room whence it was driven,
Except at night, into the vicious lane:
And it had no society, but this—
The swearer, liar, profligate, and thief:
No cheerful hearth, no fond approving smile,
No words of welcome and no kindly speech,
No softening books, good training, pattern high:
What wonder that the boy a demon grew,—
Hard, mischievous, degraded? And good men,
Solemn and staid, paced daily to and fro
Along th' adjoining street; on Sabbath days
Thronged to God's public worship, gravely knelt,
And prayed, "Thy kingdom come;" gave lavish gold
To Christianise th' antipodes,—nor cared
For the dark heathen alley-world at home.
Oh! ye who love the Saviour, reverence truth,
And feel for man, train up the youthful poor
In duty and God's fear! Thou doubtest not
Of man's depravity, believest too
In God's most needed blessing. Have, then, faith
In Christian effort. Doth bad teaching thrive,
And shall not also good? Build, fill the school,
Lead to the Bible, to the Cross, to God.
Nor shalt thou work in vain! Beneath those rags,
How knowest thou? there may be human stuff
To make a future Newton, Howard, Neff:
See to thy talent, and remember well
Their Father is thy Master; lest the poor
Rise up against thee at the judgment-day,
And at thee pointing, groan, "*We might* have been."

Editor's Portfolio.

THE CHILDREN'S MITE.

MANY Christian parents, with a laudable zeal, are striving to interest their children in the cause of foreign missions. This is well, and much good has been done in consequence—but why should their sympathies not be called out on behalf of their little shivering neighbours, as benighted as the distant heathen, and whom they may meet at the corner of almost every street? Would it not be more natural for those children whose "feet have been set in pleasant places," and to whom God has given "a goodly heritage," to be taught *first of all* to care for their poor destitute young friends at home, *some* of whom were once as well provided for as they? A lady, strongly impressed with this idea, and warmly interested in the cause of Emigration, has lately printed a circular, which she is industriously circulating among her friends, with a view of interesting the young on behalf of the Emigration Scheme. In hopes that her zeal may be a reproof to the idle, and an example to those who are willing to labour, we transcribe to our pages a part of her excellent appeal:—

"The Committee of the 'Ragged School Union,' having been disappointed in the result of their application to Government for a Grant towards the Emigration of the most deserving scholars from the metropolitan and other of their schools, are very anxious to obtain funds to assist in this most desirable plan; and it has been suggested that the necessary sum might be easily raised, if the children of every family and school would spare but the least trifle from the money given them to spend for their own gratification.

"'Many a little,' says the Scotch proverb, 'make a mickle;' and this mickle so appropriated would be a most heart-cheering reward to those poor children, who are looking forward with anxious expectation to go forth and seek employment in those far-off lands, where there is abundant work for the labourer, and abundant room for the thousands who, if left to the misery of the condition in which they are born, would in this life be a burden and a blot, and in the next must perish everlastingly.

"Perhaps there are many young people who have never heard of the thousands of wretched beings who are to be found in every great town in England: offsprings of vice and crime, heirs from their birth of misery and destitution, they have no shelter but holes and corners, where animals might creep for warmth, no food but the scantiest and often the grossest kind, no covering but rags, no means of sustaining even this miserable state of existence but by begging and stealing, and other of the most lawless and sinful pursuits. Such 'beings' have been sought out by the benevolent, and by the greatest patience and kindness have been, in many instances, persuaded to accept instruction, and, finding the comfort and happiness of doing well, are anxious to go on in the path of duty; and it is to assist them in this endeavour, that the present appeal is most earnestly made.

"Will happy children, born of kind parents, receiving (by no merit of their own, but simply by the goodness of God) the benefit of Christian education, refuse to help these desolate and abandoned ones? The merest trifle will be a boon! Withhold not, then, your mite. Remember who hath made you to differ, and render your thankoffering willingly and gladly; for it is God who hath given you the power.

"As a friend most anxious to assist in this truly kind and beneficent work, I earnestly entreat you to interest the children of your families in behalf of these valuable schools, which, under God's blessing, we may hope will rescue many young as themselves from misery and perdition."

We sincerely hope that the efforts of our devoted friend will meet with success; and that, under God, she may be the means of stirring up many to care for the young and friendless poor. If the Christian children of England raised funds sufficient to *purchase* a Missionary Ship, and send it with a band of devoted Missionaries to a foreign land, might they not, if proper means were used, raise funds sufficient to *freight* a ship to Australia, with poor ragged children from London, many of whom are now starving in the streets? We should like to see such a ship in full sail, with two hundred Ragged School Emigrants on board, and two thousand young philanthropists standing on shore, bidding them farewell; and to hear the last shrill echoes of their young voices, heartily and gratefully responding to the well-wishes of their youthful benefactors. It may be too much to expect, but not too much for the mothers of England to accomplish if they anxiously desired it.

"MY OWN VINEYARD HAVE I NOT KEPT."

THE following reply was given by the chief of the Ojibbeway Indians (when in London) to some pious friends who were striving to convince him of the truths of Christianity. What would he have said, if told that Ragged children and Ragged Schools were called by many "a new discovery?"—

"Now, my friends, I will tell you that when we first came over to this country, we thought that where you had so many preachers, so many to read and explain the Good Book, we should find the white people all good and sober people; but as we travel about, we find this was all a mistake. When we first came over, we thought that white man's religion would make all people good, and we then would have been glad to talk with you, but now we cannot say that we like to do it any more. My friends, I am willing to talk with you, if it can do any good to the hundreds and thousands of poor and hungry people that we see in your streets every day when we ride out. We see hundreds of little children with their naked feet in the snow, and we pity them, for we know they are hungry, and we give them money every time we pass by them. In four days, we have given twenty dollars to hungry children — *we give our money only to children.* We are told that the fathers of these children are in the houses where they sell fire-water, and are drunk, and in their words they every moment abuse and insult the Great Spirit. You talk about sending black coats among the Indians; now we have no such poor children among us; we have no such drunkards, or people who abuse the Great Spirit. Indians dare not do so. They pray to the Great Spirit, and he is kind to them. Now we think it would be better for your teachers all to stay at home, and go to work right here in your own streets, where all your good work is wanted. This is my advice. I would rather not say any more."

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